

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful examination of this application and respectfully request the entry of the amendments indicated hereinabove. The Applicants also thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance of Claims 1017.

Claims 1 - 25 are pending. Of the pending claim set, Claims 1-5 and 7-8 are rejected while Claims 6 and 9 are objected to. Claims 18-25 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim 1 is amended and Claim 6 is cancelled hereinabove.

Amended Claim 1 positively recites that the step of forming the low voltage core gate dielectric layer and the intermediate core gate dielectric layer is conducted in the presence of an environment containing nitrogen. These advantageously claimed features are not taught or suggested by the patent granted to Houlihan et al. As noted in the Office Action (page 5), Houlihan et al. does not teach a method where the low voltage core gate dielectric layer and the intermediate core gate dielectric layer is formed in the presence of an environment containing nitrogen (column 2 lines 49-57).

Therefore, the Applicant respectfully assert that Claim 1 is patentable over Houlihan et al. Furthermore, Claim s 2-5 and 7 -9 are allowable for depending on allowable independent Claim 1 and, in combination, including limitations not taught or described in the references of record.

For the reasons stated above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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